[*Translation*]

Import of Defence Armaments

2389. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) the expenditure incurred on the import of defence armaments during the last three years; and

(b) the steps being taken by the Government to become self-reliant in regard to defence armaments?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) : (a) & (b) The equipment requirements of the Armed Forces are met by imports only when the required items are not available in the country or when they cannot be produced indigenously in the necessary quantities within the required time frame. Orders are placed for import taking into consideration factors such as technical specifications, prices, delivery schedules, credit terms, assurance for transfer of technology, where required, and assured product support as necessary.

India has a strong research and development base as also a sizeable production infrastructure for manufacture of Defence stores. Efforts are being continuously made to reduce imports of Defence items and to make the country self-reliant in Defence armaments.

It will not be desirable to disclose further details.

[*English*]

Improvement of Chempakara Canal Stage II and Udyogamandal Canal

2390. SHRI REMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received the revised estimate for the improvement of Chempakara Canal Stage II and Udyogamandal Canal from the Government of Kerala; and

(b) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The revised estiments of the two schemes were examined and the State Government asked to furnish certain clarifications. These clarifications have been received from the State Government recently.

[*Translation*]

Insurance claim cases of Jehanabad district of Bihar

2391. SHRI RAMASHRAY PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of cases of personal accident insurance claims pertaining to district Jehanabad, Bihar pending in the New India Insurance Co. Ltd., Gulab Bhavan, New Delhi, Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd., NOIDA, Ghaziabad and National Insurance Co. Ltd., Yusuf Sarai, New Delhi Branch;

(b) the details of cases of death claims pertaining to that district pending in L.I.C. Tamluk branch in Midnapore district of West Bengal, Patna branch No. 2 and Khan Market branch in Delhi;

(c) since when all these cases are pending and the reasons for delay in their settlement;

(d) whether it is proposed to pay the interest for the period of delay at the time of settlement;

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not the reasons therefor; and

(f) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) Three policies for a total sum insured of Rs. 18·00 lakhs were taken by one Shri Anil Kumar Singh from New India Assurance Co. Ltd., Gulab Bhavan, New Delhi, Oriental Insurance Co. Ltd., Noida (District Ghaziabad) and National Insurance Co. Ltd, Yusuf Sarai. New Delhi.

(b) Eleven Accident Policies for a total sum insured of Rs. 8·77 lakhs were taken by Shri Anil Kumar Singh from L.I.C. Out of these eleven policies, four were issued by Midnapore office, five by Patna B.O. II and two by Khan Market Branch, New Delhi.

(c) The claims are pending since early 1989 as the cases are under investigation by the C.B.I.

(d) & (e) The liabilities under the policies have not yet been established and therefore the question of payment of interest does not arise.

(f) Action can be initiated by the Insurance Companies only after findings of the CBI become available.

[*English*]

Sickness in Small Scale Sector

2392. SHRIMATI BASVARAJESWARI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any suggestion from the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry for the setting up of a body similar to the Bureau for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction to deal exclusively with sickness in the small scale sector;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto; and

(c) the number of small scale sector units which are in the list of sick units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) As per the information compiled by the Reserve Bank of India, the total number of sick small scale industrial units as on December 31, 1988 (the latest date for which information has been compiled) was 2,40,573.

Construction of Highway between Madras and Kanyakumari

2393. SHRI K. RAMAMURTHEE TINDIVANAM : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made in laying the highway road between Madras and Kanyakumari and the number of road bridges completed and under completion for this purpose;

(b) whether the Government propose to monitor the progress of this project in view of the heavy traffic on the Grand Southern Trunk Road and completed the work in a specified period; and

(c) if so, the time-schedule therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) to (c) Madras to Kanyakumari stretch is already connected by sections of National Highway Nos. 45 and 7 which are fully bridged. Presumably, the Hon'ble Member is referring to development of Eastcoast Road connecting Madras and Kanyakumari via Pondicherry-Nagapattinam-Tuticorin. This road is a State road and as such, the Government of Tamil Nadu are primarily concerned with its development. However, with the financial assistance of the Government of India, 38 bridges have been completed under Central Aid Programme for State Roads of Inter-State or Economic Importance. In addition, the section from Madras to Cuddalore, having a length of about 160 kilometres is being improved under Loan Assistance of Asian Development Bank. The work has recently been awarded by the State Government for execution. The progress of this project will be monitored by the State Government and the project is targetted to be completed by 1995.